

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-23 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 4, 11, 13, 18, and 23 are canceled. Claims 2, 3, 5-10, 12, 14-17, and 19-22 are amended.

As listed on page 1 of the Office Action mailed September 10, 2004, claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9, 11-13, 15, 18-21, and 23 were rejected. Claims 5, 8, 10, 14, 16, 17, and 22 were objected to. Applicants have thoroughly reviewed the outstanding Office Action including the Examiner's remarks and the references cited therein. The following remarks are believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action. All the pending claims at issue are believed to be patentable over the cited references.

DRAWINGS

On page 2 of the Office Action, Examiner objected to FIGS. 1 and 2 of the drawings for reasons the Examiner set forth on page 2.

As disclosed in paragraph [0029] of the disclosure, "The latching bar 18 may be rounded or contoured in order to complement the profile of the burner door 14. Not all embodiments of the invention will include the use of variable contoured doors." Claim 7 claims "a bar that latches the door in a closed position ... wherein the bar is contoured to complement the shape of the door." The dictionary definition [Merriam-Webster Collegiate Online] of "contour" as an adjective is "made to fit the contour of something," while as a noun, "contour" is defined as "the general form or structure of something." The definition of "contour" includes a substantially planar surface as shown in the figures as well as curved surfaces. Applicants submit that the contour of the latching bar 18 shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 has been made to fit the general form or structure of the burner door 14 at the location installed, and that the contoured bar of claim 7 is thus shown.

As disclosed in paragraph [0028] of the specification, “In some embodiments of the invention, a handle 40 is attached to the latching bar 18 to provide an easy means for grabbing and moving the latching bar 18.” Applicants submit that the handle 40 shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 is an embodiment of the “means for gripping the latching bar” in claim 12.

Both the specification and the drawings distinguish between the latching bar 18 and the latching mechanism 62, to wit: The latching bar 18 “attaches to the housing 16 via a retaining bracket 20” on one end, and “is fitted with an inline electrical interlock 28” on the other end (para. [0023]). The “male plug 46 has a housing 52” (para. [0030]). The latching mechanism 62 “is attached to the outer edges of the housing 52 ... and latches to corresponding structure on the female plug 58” (para. [0031]). Thus the handle 40, in being “attached to the latching bar 18,” provides a means for gripping the latching bar 18 as indicated in claim 12, and is not claimed as a means for gripping the latching mechanism 62 as indicated by the Examiner.

As disclosed in paragraph [0028] of the specification, “the latching bar 18 has insulation 19 attached to it on the side of the latching bar 18 that contacts the combustion door 14 in order to reduce an amount of heat that the latching bar 18 absorbs by contacting the combustion door 14.” Applicants submit that the insulation 19 shown in contact with the burner door 14 and the bar 18 in FIG. 1 is an embodiment of the “means for impeding heat transfer” in claim 14.

As further disclosed in paragraph [0028] of the specification, “In some embodiments of the invention, the latching bar 18 has insulation 29 surrounding the plug 28 in order to provide electrical insulation between the plug 28 and the latching bar 18.” Applicants submit that the insulation 29 shown surrounding the plug 28 in FIGS. 1 and 2 is an embodiment of the “electrical insulation surrounding the means for providing an electrical connection and configured to insulate the electrical connection” in claim 15. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the objection to the drawing be withdrawn.

SPECIFICATION

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to the claims and the drawings fully resolve the Examiner's objections to the specification.

As indicated above under Drawings, Applicants respectfully submit that the terms "easy means for grabbing and moving" in paragraph [0028] of the specification and "means for gripping" in claim 12 are equivalent.

As further indicated above under Drawings, Applicants respectfully submit that the insulation limitations disclosed in claims 14 and 15 are clearly specified as to operation and location.

Applicants respectfully request that objection to the specification be withdrawn.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

On page 2 of the Office Action, Examiner objected to claims 12, 14, and 15 for reasons the Examiner set forth on page 2.

Claims 14 and 15 are objected to because, according to Examiner, the various insulations are not disclosed in the specification. Applicants respectfully disagree. In at least paragraph [0028] of the specification, two types of insulation, namely thermal insulation between the bar and the door and electrical insulation surrounding the connector on the bar, are disclosed. Nonetheless, to further prosecution, Applicants have amended the drawings and the claims to further emphasize this disclosure. Applicants respectfully request that the objection be removed.

Claim 12 is objected to because of, according to Examiner, a lack of disclosure of the means for gripping. Applicants respectfully disagree. At least in FIG. 2 in the drawings, at reference numeral 40, as well as in paragraph [0028] of the specification, "a handle 40 is attached to the latching bar 18 to provide an easy means for grabbing." Nonetheless, to further prosecution, Applicants have amended FIG. 1 in the drawings and the claim to further emphasize this disclosure. Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claim 12 be removed.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-3, 7, 11, 12, 18, 19 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Rowe (U.S. Patent 2,204,002). Without acquiescing to the Examiner's rejections, but rather to further prosecution, claims 1, 11, and 18 are canceled. Claims 2 and 3 depend from independent claim 5. Claim 7 depends from independent claim 8. Claim 12 depends from independent claim 14. Claims 19-21 depend from independent claim 22. Applicants respectfully submit that the dependent claims listed are allowable at least due to their dependency.

For at least the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully request that the § 102 rejection of claims 1-3, 7, 11, 12, 18, 19 and 21 be withdrawn.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 4, 6, 9, 13, 15, 20, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rowe. Without acquiescing to the Examiner's rejections, but rather to further prosecution, claims 4, 13, and 23 are canceled. Regarding claims 6, 9, 15, and 20, Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

With respect to claims 6 and 9, these claims are patentable at least by reason of their dependency on claim 5, patentability of which will be shown below under Allowable Subject Matter. Claim 15 is patentable at least by reason of its dependency on claim 14, patentability of which will be shown below under Allowable Subject Matter. Claim 20 is patentable at least by reason of its dependency on claim 22, patentability of which will be shown below under Allowable Subject Matter.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the § 103 rejection of claims 4, 6, 9, 13, 15, and 23 be withdrawn.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Examiner identifies claims 5, 8, 10, 14, 16, 17, and 22 as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for finding patentable subject matter in claims 5, 8, 10, 14, 16, 17, and 22. Applicants have rewritten claims 5, 8, 14, and 22 in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have rewritten claim 10 to depend from independent claim 8, and have rewritten claims 16 and 17 to depend from independent claim 14. In addition, as noted above, Applicants have rewritten claims 2, 3, 6, and 9 to depend from independent claim 5, claim 7 to depend from independent claim 8, claims 12 and 15 to depend from independent claim 14, and claims 19, 20, and 21 to depend from independent claim 22.

Applicants respectfully submit that the dependent claims listed are allowable at least due to their dependency. Applicants further submit that, in view of the above comments, claims 5, 8, 14, and 22, which are the base claims for claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15-17, and 19-21, are allowable, so claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15-17, and 19-21 are allowable. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the objection to claims 5, 8, 10, 14, 16, 17, and 22 be removed.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request that rejections of claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 12, 15, and 19-21 be withdrawn. Applicants also request objections to claims 5, 8, 10, 14, 16, 17, and 22 be withdrawn. If, for any reason, the Examiner disagrees, please call the undersigned attorney at 202-861-1792 in an effort to resolve any matter still outstanding before issuing another action. The undersigned attorney is confident that any issue which might remain can readily be worked out by telephone.

In the event this paper is not timely filed, Applicants petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fee deficiencies or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2036.

Respectfully submitted,

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Amendments to the Drawings:

Please replace the first sheet of drawings showing FIGS. 1 and 2 with the attached amended drawings showing FIGS. 1 and 2.

The partial top view FIG. 1 is amended to show insulation 19 attached to the latching bar 18, so that the combination of the latching bar 18 and the insulation 19 attached to it contacts the combustion door 14. FIG. 1 is further amended to be more dimensionally consistent with FIG. 2. The wide portion 42 and the narrow portion 44 of the burner door 14 are thus more readily identified; the narrow portion 44 is expressly assigned the same reference numeral in FIG. 1 assigned to it in FIG. 2. FIG. 1 is further amended to show explicitly that the latching bar 18 has electrical insulation 29 surrounding the plug 28.

The partial front view FIG. 2 is amended to show as hidden lines the portion of the bar 22 obscured by the retaining bracket 20 and the concealed elements of the bracket 20 and the burner door narrow portion 44, as shown in FIG. 1, which hidden lines coincide with the lateral extent of the insulation 19. FIG. 2 further shows the insulating element 29 surrounding the plug 28.

No new matter is added by these amendments. In at least the following locations, the indicated insulation is disclosed in the specification: in paragraph [0028], line 3 states, "In some embodiments of the invention, the latching bar 18 has insulation 19 attached to it on the side of the latching bar 18 that contacts the combustion door 14." In paragraph [0028], line 6 states, "In some embodiments of the invention, the latching bar 18 has insulation 29 surrounding the plug 28 in order to provide electrical insulation." Insulation is likewise disclosed in the originally filed claims 5, 6, and 15.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet